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# GK DIGEST 2015

For SBI, RBI, IBPS & other Banking Exams

By : GradeStack



## GK DIGEST-2015

Dear readers,

This GK Digest is a complete docket of important news and events that occurred in last six months (January – June 2015). The GK Digest is important and relevant for all competitive exams like SBI PO, RBI Assistant, LIC ADO, IBPS RRB, IBPS PO, SSC, Insurance and UPSC Exams.

### Banking, Economics & Financial News

#### RBI in the News

- 1. RBI cuts repo rate by 25 basis points:** On 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2015, the Reserve Bank of India in its second bi – monthly statement, reduced the Repo rate by 25 basis points from 7.50% to 7.25% with immediate effect. Therefore, the Reverse repo rate changed from 6.75% to 6.25 %, and the Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) rate and the Bank rate changed from 8.50% to 8.25 %. There has been no change in Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) 4% and Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR) 21.5%. RBI will announce 3<sup>rd</sup> bi – monthly policy statement on August 4, 2015.

#### Current Rates:

|                                    |        |             |
|------------------------------------|--------|-------------|
| 1.Repo Rate                        | 7.25%  | (changed)   |
| 2.Reverse Repo                     | 6.25%  | (changed)   |
| 3.CRR(Cash Reserve ratio)          | 4.00%  | (unchanged) |
| 4.SLR (Statutory Liquidity Ratio)  | 21.50% | (unchanged) |
| 5.MSF (Marginal Standing Facility) | 8.25%  | (changed)   |
| 6.Bank Rate                        | 8.25%  | (changed)   |

2. The Reserve Bank of India has lowered down the GDP growth forecast for current fiscal (2015-16) from 7.8% to 7.6%.
3. RBI extends deadline for exchanging pre-2005 currency till December 31, 2015 from June 30, 2015.
4. Meena Hemchandra appointed as new executive director of RBI: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has appointed Meena Hemchandra as the Executive Director(ED) with immediate effect.
5. RBI released draft Guidelines on Net Stable Funding Ratio for Banks: The Reserve Bank of India released the Draft Guidelines on Net Stable Funding Ratio (NSFR) under Basel III Framework on Liquidity Standards for banks. The Reserve Bank proposed to make NSFR applicable to all banks in India from 1 January 2018. The objective of NSFR is to ensure that banks maintain a stable funding profile in relation to their assets and off-balance sheet activities.

**What is NSFR?** - Net Stable Funding Ratio (NSFR) is defined as the amount of available stable funding relative to the amount of required stable funding. It measures the amount of longer-term, stable sources of funding employed by an institution relative to the liquidity profiles of the assets funded and the potential for contingent calls on funding liquidity arising from off-balance sheet commitments and obligations.

6. **RBI allows value up to Rs. 2000 in 'Tap and pay' transactions without PIN:** Reserve Bank of India allowed banks to enable transactions in contactless cards for values up to Rs 2,000 without requiring a separate PIN authentication. **Note: 'Tap and pay' refers to the use** of near field communication technology in payment cards where instead of the traditional swiping of the card and punching in payment details, all the customer needs to do is wave a card in front of an acceptance device for the bill to be settled.
7. RBI has increased the limit for foreign exchange (FOREX) remittances under Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS) from **\$125,000** to \$250,000 (Rs. 1.5 crore) per person per year. Under the LRS, Indians can open, maintain and hold foreign currency accounts with banks outside India for carrying out transactions, without permission from the RBI.

8. **RBI has lifted a ban on carrying** Indian bank notes of Rs 1,000 and 500 denominations to and from Nepal and Bhutan. RBI had imposed this restriction since May, 2000. The Indian central bank, however, has put a limit on carrying such notes at Rs 25,000 per person
9. **RBI revises priority sector lending norms:** The Reserve Bank has revised priority sector lending norms to ensure a phased increase in loans to small farmers, and also made it clear that smaller foreign banks will have to meet the 40 percent target over the next five years.

**Important points of the guidelines:**

- ✓ Under the PM's new financial inclusion drive, overdrafts of up to Rs 5,000 being extended by banks which will be treated as priority sector lending (PSL), subject to a cap on annual household income--which is Rs 1 lakh for rural and Rs 1.60 lakh for non-rural households.
- ✓ As per the new guidelines, credit to small and marginal farmers should be at least 8 percent of a bank's total credit by March 2017.
- ✓ Banks have been asked to lend 40 percent of their credit to the priority sector, failing which money would get deposited into a low-yielding fund for rural development.
- ✓ For foreign banks, where the mandatory PSL has been a contentious issue, RBI said that banks with less than 20 branches will have to gradually achieve the 40 percent target by March 2020.

**Agreement signed by Reserve Bank of India:**

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1. **RBI signed agreement with European Central Bank (ECB)** - RBI and European Central Bank (ECB) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on cooperation in the field of central banking. The aim of the deal is to exchange of information, policy dialogue and technical cooperation between the two institutions.
2. **RBI has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Brazil's** Central Bank - Banco Central do Brasil (BCB) on Supervisory Cooperation and Exchange of Supervisory Information.
3. **RBI signed currency swap agreement with Central Bank of Sri Lanka:** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) signed a currency swap agreement of \$ 400million with the Central Bank of Sri Lanka. The agreement will be valid for a period of three years.

**SBI Bank in News –**

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1. **SBI's mCASH for money transfer:** State Bank of India launched a new initiative "mCASH" for money transfer to anyone without knowing their Bank account details irrespective of whether the recipient bank is SBI or not. Any SBI customer having Internet banking facility can now transfer funds, without registration of beneficiary by entering beneficiary mobile number or email-ID, with the help of "mCASH" app and for this the customer has to visit [www.onlinesbi.com](http://www.onlinesbi.com).
2. **"sbiINTOUCH" contactless card payment:** The bank has launched the **sbiINTOUCH** Contactless Debit Card and SBI Signature Contactless Credit Card for quick, secure and hassle-free payments at merchant outlets. Customers can make payments up to Rs. 2,000 per tap and pay transactions at select point-of-sale (POS) machines.
3. **SBI join hands with PayPal to enable cross-border transactions:** State Bank of India (SBI), had partnership with digital payments company, PayPal, to facilitate cross-border trade and payments. This will be SBI's first such tie-up for remittances and payments.
4. **SBI & Snapdeal to offer seller finance:** State Bank of India (SBI) had partnered with e-commerce company Snapdeal for seller financing scheme. Under the scheme, SBI will provide loans to small and medium enterprises at easier interest rates and data regarding the sellers will be provided by Snapdeal.
5. **SBI to finance small tea growers in North East:** SBI will provide finance of Rs 100 crore which will help 3,000 small tea growers in the North East states.
6. **SBI & Indian Army** has signed an agreement on Defence Salary Package.
7. **SBI & Reliance** partnered for Payment Bank Licence. RIL will be the promoter and SBI will be the joint venture partner with equity investment of up to 30%.

## HDFC Bank in News -

1. HDFC Bank, launched a **10-second paperless instant loan Scheme** for its existing customers. The 10-second loan Scheme was launched as part of HDFC Bank's digital banking platform GoDigital. With this, HDFC bank became first banking institution to completely automate the entire process of loan approval and disbursement.
2. **HDFC ranked 7<sup>th</sup> in world's top 10 lists of consumer finance firms:** HDFC has emerged the only Indian company among the world's 10 biggest consumer financial services firms and ranked 7<sup>th</sup>, after giants like American Express, Visa and Mastercard. American Express is placed on the top followed by Capital One Financial, Visa, Discover Financial Services and Orix in the top-five. Mastercard is ranked sixth.
3. **HDFC & Apollo Hospitals join hands for pre-paid medical card:** HDFC Bank had partnership with Apollo Hospitals to launch a co-branded medical benefits card, which allows corporates to disburse medical allowances to their employees and has insurance cover

for accidents. The bank claimed that this is the first-of-its kind product in the country.

4. HDFC Bank became the first Indian bank to launch Mobile Banking App for Apple iWatch.
5. **Chillr mobile app:** HDFC Bank partnered with MobME, a Kochi-based technology firm to launch a mobile app "Chillr". It is a first-of-its kind application that is linked directly to the customer's bank account. Customer can make 10 transactions in a day with a maximum limit of ₹5,000.
6. HDFC was named among 50 most valuable banks in 2014 with a market capitalization of US\$ 41.58 bn. It was ranked at 45th position.

**Note:** State Bank of India was ranked at 51 and ICICI Bank was ranked at 55th position. Well Fargo of the USA is the largest bank in the world based on market capitalization with US\$ 284.39 bn. which is followed by Industrial & Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) and JP Morgan Chase & Co.

## ICICI Bank in News -

1. **ICICI Bank ties up with Alibaba to provide easy finance:** ICICI Bank has tied up with Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba to provide easier trade finance to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the country.
2. **ICICI Bank launched its first branch in China:** India's largest private sector bank, ICICI bank has launched its first branch in Shanghai, China, which was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
3. **ICICI became first bank to launch Voice Password for Phone Banking:** ICICI Bank became the first bank in the country to launch voice recognition service which authenticates customers based on their speech patterns and allows them to execute banking transactions through the bank's call centre in a quick, secure and convenient manner.
4. **ICICI Bank launched E-wallet 'Pockets' Digital Bank** - service to allow any individual to instantly make

transactions on a mobile phone with or without a bank account. The service is also known as Digital Bank, which allow customers to deposit or transfer from any bank account through a debit card or Net banking account and start transacting immediately on a mobile without any documentation.

5. ICICI launched **India's first contact - less debit & credit cards.**
6. ICICI bank has tied up with a leading UAE-based bank to offer an instant remitting service to Indians residing in the Gulf nation.
7. ICICI Bank launched its own version of Digital Village Project by adopting the Akodara Village in the Sabarkantha district of Gujarat.
8. ICICI Bank became the second Indian bank to launch Mobile Banking App for Apple iWatch.

## Other Banking & Financial News -

1. NABARD to provide Rs. 30,000 crore credit to farmers for irrigation: National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has set a target of providing 30,000 crore rupees as credit to farmers for irrigational purpose.
2. Infosys signed a multi-million euro deal with Deutsche Bank. As per this agreement, Infosys will provide

services like application maintenance, package implementation and testing services across the Deutsche Bank Group.

3. New Bank Note Paper Line unit inaugurated in Hoshangabad, Madhya Pradesh.
4. World Bank has approved an additional loan of 650 million dollars for India's Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor (DFC) Project. DFC Project aims at the faster

delivery of goods between the northern and eastern parts of the country.

5. **Axis Bank launched Ping Pay service for instant money transfer:** With the help of this service, Axis bank customer can transfer or ask for cash, through various social media channels like Whatsapp, Facebook, Twitter, Email list and phone contact list. The transaction limit is at Rs50,000 per day.
6. **YES Bank has tied up with Payworld** to distribute co-branded open loop prepaid cards to customers.
7. **ADB lend \$31-million loan to Karnataka river basins:** The Asian Development Bank (ADB) will provide \$31 million loan to boost water availability in selected river basins in Karnataka.
8. **World Bank approves 250 million dollar credit for Enhancing Teacher Effectiveness in Bihar:** The World Bank has offered a credit of 250 million dollars to the Government of Bihar to improve its school education programme.
9. **Indian Army & Bank of India signed an agreement on Defence Salary Package:** Indian Army and the Bank of India (BOI) signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the Defence Salary Package. The agreement will benefit a large number of serving and retired Army personnel who own their accounts with BOI.
10. **Bharatiya Mahila Bank Ltd. (BMB) has been conferred the Asian Banker Achievement Award 2015.** It was

awarded for Technology Implementation in the category of Best Outsourcing Project (New Bank)

11. YES Bank, India's fifth largest private sector bank has opened its first overseas representative office in Abu Dhabi, UAE.
12. India's leading Indian public sector bank, Bank of Baroda has joined hands with UAE Exchange to offer an instant cash transfer facility to NRI customers. As per the agreement, customers can send money to their desired bank accounts in Bank of Baroda in India within minutes.
13. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) limit in the insurance sector increased to 49% from 26%.
14. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has signed a loan of up to US\$200 million with YES Bank Ltd which will provide financing assistance to low income women borrowers and small - scale farmers in rural India.
15. **MUDRA Bank** to encourage entrepreneurship among SC/STs and OBCs. The Mudra Bank will refinance institutions through a Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana.  
**Capital Requirement:** The MUDRA Bank will set up with the capital of Rs. 20,000 crores and would be responsible of regulating and refinancing all Micro - finance Institutions (MFI). A sum of Rs. 3,000 crores would also be provided to Mudra Bank, to create Credit Guarantee corpus for guaranteeing loans being provided to the micro enterprises.

#### India's GDP growth rate projected by different organisations for the current fiscal

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. RBI – 7.9%   | 4. World Bank – 7.5%                                   |
| 2. CRISIL (Indian credit rating agency) – 7.9%                          | 5. Moody's (International credit rating agency) – 7.5% |
| 3. Morgan Stanley (Multinational financial services corporation) – 7.5% | 6. IMF – 7.5%  |
|   | 7. ADB – 7.8%  |

## CURRENT AFFAIRS

### New Appointments/ National

#### Persons Appointed in Important Organisation -

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| ✓ New Chief Vigilance Commissioner - KV Chowdary   | ✓ President of Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) – Sumit Mazumder. He succeeded Ajay Shriram.  |
| ✓ CMD & CEO of National Housing Bank - Sriram Kalyanaraman   | ✓ Chairman of Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC)–Pahlaj Nihalani. He replaced Leela Samson. |
| ✓ New Chancellor of the Nalanda University - George Yeo (Former Singapore Foreign Minister). He replaced Nobel laureate Amartya Sen. | ✓ Chairman of Sangeet Natak Akademi - Shekhar Sen.  |
| ✓ Chief Election Commissioner of India - Nasim Zaidi. He succeeded HS Brahma.  | ✓ President of FICCI - Jyotsna Suri. He replaces Sidharth Birla.                                    |
| ✓ Election Commissioner - Achal Kumar Jyoti.   | ✓ Chairman of National Safety Council (NSC) – K Satish Reddy.                                       |
| ✓ Chief Economic Advisor - Arvind Subramanian  | ✓ New executive chairman of ICICI Bank -Mahendra Kumar Sharma. He replaced K.V. Kamath.             |
| <b>New Secretary Appointed</b>   |   |
| ✓ Home Secretary - LC Goyal. He replaced Anil Goswami.   | ✓ Foreign Secretary - S Jaishankar. He replaced Sujatha Singh.                                      |



- ✓ Oil Secretary - Kapil Dev Tripathi. He replaced Saurabh Chandra.
- ✓ Cabinet Secretary - Pradeep Kumar Sinha. He replaced Ajit Seth.
- ✓ Defence Secretary - G Mohan Kumar. He replaced RK Mathur.

### NITI Aayog

#### New Appointment in Defence, Space & Intelligence Agency –

- ✓ Vice – Chief of Indian Army – Lt. General Man Mohan Singh Rai. He succeeded Lt Gen Philip Campose.
- ✓ Scientific Advisor to the Defence Minister - G Satheesh Reddy
- ✓ Chief of Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) - Surender Singh. He replaced Arvind Ranjan.
- ✓ Director General (DG) of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) - Dr. Selvin Christopher

- ✓ Chairman - Narendra Modi (PM)
- ✓ First Vice - Chairman - Arvind Panagariya
- ✓ First Chief Executive officer (CEO) – Sindhushree Khullar
- ✓ Two New Advisor - Alok Kumar & Jitendra Kumar.

- ✓ Director of Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) - K. Sivan. He replaced M.S. Dathan.
- ✓ Chief of ISRO- A.S. Kiran Kumar. He replaced K. Radha krishnan.
- ✓ Director of ISRO Satellite Centre - M Annadurai. He replaced S K Shiva kumar.
- ✓ DG of Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP). – Krishna Chaudhry. He succeeded Subhas Goswami.

#### Appointment in States –

- ✓ **Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu** – Jayalalitha. She replaced O. Panneerselvam. She became the 29th Chief Minister of the State.

#### New Governor Appointed

1. **Governor of Jharkhand** - Draupadi Murmu. She succeeded Syed Ahmed. She is the first woman Governor of Jharkhand and became the ninth Governor of Jharkhand.
2. **Governor of Arunachal Pradesh** - J P Rakkhawa
3. **Governor of Meghalaya** - V Shanmuganthan
4. **Governor of Tripura** - Tathagata Roy
5. **Governor of Manipur** - Syed Ahmed
6. **Governor of Mizoram** - Nirbhay Sharma

#### High – Court -

- ✓ Chief Justice of Sikkim High Court - Justice Sunil Kumar Sinha.
- ✓ First woman judge of Sikkim HC - Meenakshi Madan Rai became the first lady judge of the Sikkim High Court.

#### Ambassador (Envoy)

- ✓ Nepal ambassador to India - Deep Kumar Upadhyay
- ✓ US ambassador to India - Richard Rahul Verma. He replaced Nancy Powell.
- ✓ China ambassador to India - Le Yucheng. He replaced Wei Wei
- ✓ Bangladesh ambassador to India - Syed Muazzem Ali. He replaced Tariq A Karim

### Appointments/ International

#### Prime Minister

- ✓ PM of Peru - Pedro Cateriano. He replaced Ana Jara.
- ✓ PM of Britain - David Cameron. He became the PM for second term.
- ✓ Deputy PM of Saudi Arabia - Mohammed bin Nayef
- ✓ PM of Israel – Benjamin Netanyahu. He became the PM for a fourth term.
- ✓ PM of Greece - Alexis Tsipras. He became the youngest Prime Minister of Greece since 1865.
- ✓ PM of Mali - Modibo Keita. He replaced Moussa Mara.
- ✓ PM of Sri Lanka – Ranil Wickeramasinghe.
- ✓ PM of Mauritius – Anerood Jugnauth. He replaced Navinchandra Ramgoolam

### President

- ✓ President of Mauritius - Ameenah Gurib-Fakim. She is the first woman to hold the position of President of Mauritius.
- ✓ President of Nigeria - Muhammadu Buhari. He became the 5th President of the country by defeating the incumbent President Goodluck Jonathan.
- ✓ President of Guyana: David Granger. He becomes eighth President of Guyana.
- ✓ President of Kazakhstan - Nursultan Nazarbayev re-elected Kazakhstan President for fifth time.
- ✓ President of Sudan - Omar al-Bashir re-elected as President of Sudan.
- ✓ President of Croatia - Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic. She became the First Woman President of Croatia.
- ✓ President of Italy - Sergio Mattarella. He replaced Giorgio Napolitano.
- ✓ President of Uruguay - Tabare R. Vazquez Rosas.
- ✓ President of Sri Lanka - Maithripala Sirisena. He replaces Mahinda Rajapaksa.
- ✓ President of Zambia - Edgar Lungu
- ✓ President of Romania - Klaus Werner Iohannis. He replaces Traian Basescu.

### Ambassador (Envoy)

- ✓ India's ambassador to France - Dr. Mohan Kumar. He replaced Arun Kumar.
- ✓ India's ambassador to US - Arun Singh. He replaced S. Jaishankar

### First -

- ✓ First President of New Development Bank of BRICS nations - KV Kamath. BRICS nations include - (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa)
- ✓ First Indian-American woman judge in New York - Raja Rajeswari appointed as the first India-born woman to be appointed a judge in New York City.
- ✓ First African-American woman Attorney General - Loretta Lynch appointed United States' first African-American woman Attorney General. She succeeded Eric Holder.
- ✓ First Asian woman Mayor of UK - Harbhajan Kaur Dheer.

### Sports:

- ✓ New ICC President - Zaheer Abbas.
- ✓ New BCCI President - Jagmohan Dalmiya. He replaced N. Srinivasan.
- ✓ Vice-President of the Asian Athletics Association (AAA) - Lalit Bhanot
- ✓ Fifa president - Sepp Blatter re-elected as Fifa president for fifth term.

## International Meets & Summits

### Summits held/to be held in India

1. IBSA Summit 2015 - New Delhi, India. (IBSA = India - Brazil - South Africa)
2. 6<sup>th</sup> Nuclear Energy conference held in New Delhi, India.
3. The 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of SAARC health ministers held in New Delhi, India.  
**SAARC comprises 8 nations** - Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.
4. The 15<sup>th</sup> Delhi Sustainable Development summit held in New Delhi, India.
5. First World Ocean Science Congress held in Kochi, Kerala. The focal themes of the WOSC 2015 - **Protect Oceans for Posterity and Blue Economy**.
6. Indo-Global Pharma Expo 2015 - to be held in Hyderabad on 24 July 2015. The theme of the Summit will be "**Innovation and Advances**."
7. World Congress on Information Technology (WCIT) to be held in Hyderabad, India in 2018. Theme of the 2018 WCIT will be **Future of enterprises**.

## International

1. **7<sup>th</sup> BRICS Summit** – Ufa, Russia. Theme of the summit - BRICS Partnership – a Powerful Factor of Global Development.

**Note:** BRICS nations include - Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.

- 8th BRICS summit will be held in New Delhi, India in 2016.
- 6th BRICS summit was held at Fortaleza in Brazil in 2014.

2. **41<sup>st</sup> G7 Summit** - Elmau, Germany. Theme of the summit - Think Ahead. Act Together.

**Note:**

- G 7 nations include - Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, U.K., US, and the European Commission (EC). EC is a permanently welcome participant in all meetings and decision-making since 1981.
- The guest invitees for the event included Ethiopia, Iraq, Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal, Tunisia and the UN.

**Key issues discussed in 41<sup>st</sup> G7 Summit –**

- Protection of the marine environment, marine governance and resource efficiency.
- Antibiotic resistance, neglected and poverty-related diseases, and Ebola.
- Retail and supply chain standards.

- Empowering self-employed women and women in vocational training.
- The leaders of the G7 countries also discuss energy security, including as part of the Rome G7 Energy.

**Future Summits to be held in –**

- The 42nd G7 Summit 2016 – Japan
- The 43rd G7 Summit 2017 – Italy
- The 44th G7 Summit 2018 – Canada

3. 13th UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice held in Doha, Qatar.
4. The 9th International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) meeting to be held in Abu Dhabi.  
**Note:** India has been designated to chair the ninth meeting of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) Council.
5. World Economic Forum annual Summit 2015 - Davos, Switzerland.
6. 19<sup>th</sup> SAARC Summit 2016 - Islamabad, Pakistan.  
**Note:** 18<sup>th</sup> SAARC Summit held in Kathmandu, Nepal in 2014.
7. 15<sup>th</sup> G - 20 Summit 2015 – Turkey.  
**Note:** 16<sup>th</sup> G - 20 Summit 2016 – China  
14<sup>th</sup> G20 Leaders Summit 2014 - Brisbane, Queensland (Australia)
8. 4<sup>th</sup> Nuclear security summit 2016 – United States.

## India ranking in various sectors –

- ✓ India topped in the regional inflow of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in South Asia region during year 2014, accounting for 34 billion US dollars investments.  
**Top five FDI recipients** in South Asia: India, Iran, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka.
- ✓ India among top five economies: World Bank report says India has figured in top five emerging economies for highest investment commitments in private sector, infrastructure sectors, energy, transport and water. The top five countries with the biggest investment commitments in 2014 are Brazil, Turkey, Peru, Colombia and India.
- ✓ India stood 2<sup>nd</sup> among 40 countries in terms of Confidence in National Government in 2014 as per the Government at a Glance 2015 report that placed Switzerland at the top with Norway coming in third.
- ✓ India ranks at 13<sup>th</sup> spot in generation electricity from nuclear source in 2014.
- ✓ India jumps to 6<sup>th</sup> from 10<sup>th</sup> position, in terms of in terms of publishing scientific research papers in different journals.
- ✓ India ranked 6<sup>th</sup> place in the top rankings of space-faring nations, a report by a Chinese research institution Beijing Institute of Space Science and Technology.

**Note:** The list is top by United States. Europe and Russia are ranked as the next two great powers. China's space capabilities are ranked the fourth in the world.

- ✓ India ranked at 125<sup>th</sup> in the world for fixed broadband penetration.
- ✓ India is the 5<sup>th</sup> biggest producer of e-waste in the world. India came in fifth, behind the US, China, Japan and Germany.
- ✓ Indians ranked on 16<sup>th</sup> place in the new HSBC list of Swiss bank account holders.  
**Note:** Switzerland people remain on the top rank in the list, followed by UK, Venezuela, US and France in the top five.
- ✓ India is the world's biggest arms importers.  
**Note:** According to the new study of Stockholm International Peace Institute (SIPRI); India, Saudi Arabia, China, the United Arab Emirates and Pakistan have become the largest importers of weapons in 2010-2014.
- ✓ India is home to the 4<sup>th</sup> largest number of ultra-high net worth households.

**Note:** The US remains the country with the largest number of ultra-high-networth (UHNW) households followed by China, the UK, India and Germany.



- ✓ **IGI Airport is world's best airport for 2014:** Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) has been adjudged the world's best airport for the year 2014, under the category of handling 25 to 40 million passengers per annum.
- ✓ India becomes most "attractive investment destination": A ranking of destinations for

attractiveness to foreign investors has placed India at the top among 110 countries. China has secured the 65th position and the U.S. is at the 50th. Earlier, In 2014 index, India was at the sixth position and Hong Kong was number one.

### India's rank in different indexes

1. Environmental Democracy Index 2015 – **24**  
**Note:** The index is topped by Lithuania at the first position, Latvia at the second and Russia at the third position.
2. World Press freedom Index 2015 – **136**  
**Note:** Finland on the first position followed by Norway and Denmark.
3. FM Global Resilience Index 2015 – **119** (Norway topped the index.)
4. World Hunger List 2015 - India tops in World Hunger List.
5. World Human Development Index – **135** (Norway tops the list)
6. World Happiness index 2015 – **117**  
**Note:** **Switzerland** topped the index and followed by Iceland, Denmark, Norway and Canada. Syria ranked last (158), making it the least happy country in the world.

### Important Committees

1. Deepak Mohanty **committee** – to frame action plan on financial inclusion.
2. **A P Shah committee** – A high level committee on the controversial issue of payment of Minimum Alternate Tax (MAT) by foreign institutional investors.
3. **Bhupendra Yadav committee** – to head panel on the Goods and Services Tax, GST bill
4. **SS Ahluwalia committee** - on the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition Rehabilitation and Resettlement (LARR) (Amendment) Bill, 2015.
5. **Vijay Kelkar committee:** on Revisiting and Revitalizing the Public Private Partnership (PPP) Model of Infrastructure Development.
6. **B N Navalawala committee:** to head task force on inter-linking of rivers.
7. **Ajay Shankar committee:** to suggest simplified compliance for establishing new industries.
8. **AK Bhargava committee:** to look into the issues of "Net neutrality".
9. **Dhirendra Swarup committee** – to begin the preparatory work for Financial Redress Agency (FRA) that was recommended by the Financial Sector Legislative Reforms Commission (FSLRC).

### National News -

1. **India sets two new Guinness world records on "International Yoga Day":** India has set two Guinness world records (GWR) in Rajpath yoga event held on the eve of first International Yoga Day ( June 21 ) led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The awards were received by Union AYUSH Minister Shripad Yesso Naik from representatives of Guinness World Records.  
Two Guinness world records are :-  
(a) Largest number of participants – 35,985 people had participated in largest yoga demonstration at a single venue (Rajpath yoga event).  
(b) People of 84 nationalities performed yoga at one place.
2. India's first National University for skill development to be set up in Bihar.
3. BSNL launched mobile wallet service "Speed Pay".
4. BSNL became the first telecom company to offer free national roaming across the country.
5. Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has announced to set up 40,000 Wireless Fidelity (Wi-Fi) hot spots across the country by 2018.
6. India's Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) gets clearance to do business in Bangladesh: Now, The LIC will start business as the joint venture entity called LIC Bangladesh Ltd with a paid-up capital of 1 billion Takas with LIC holding half of it.
7. Union Government launched "Khoya Paya" "**Khoyapaya.gov.in**", web portal. This is the first

- citizen based website to exchange information on missing and found children.
8. Union Cabinet approved motor vehicles pact between India and Bhutan, Bangladesh and Nepal. The agreement which is similar to the SAARC Motor Vehicle Agreement (MVA) seeks to regulate the vehicular traffic of passenger, personal and cargo amongst **Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal (BBIN)** countries.
  9. **Jind and Karnal** districts of Haryana and **Muzaffarnagar** of Uttar Pradesh were included in National Capital Region. It was announced by Urban Development minister M Venkaiah Naidu after a meet of National Capital Region Planning Board (NCRPB) meeting in New Delhi.
  10. Union Government launched Augmented Reality Application Named **"Sakaar"**, to highlight the achievements of the Department of Space.
  11. The Election Commission(EC) has suspended recognition of the P A Sangma led National People's Party (NPP)- a recognised state party in Meghalaya for its failure to file the election expenditure statement for last year's Lok Sabha elections.
  12. Union Cabinet approved setting up of six Indian Institutes of Management (IIM). These new IIMs will be located at Amritsar (Punjab), Bodh Gaya (Bihar), Nagpur (Maharashtra), Sambalpur (Odisha), Sirmaur (Himachal Pradesh) and Vishakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh). With the new institutes, the number of IIMs will go up to 19.
  13. Union Government increases number of work days under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) from 100 days to 150 days in drought-affected areas of the country.
  14. Indian Railways has named the train No 19031/19032, Ahmedabad-Haridwar-Ahmedabad, famously known as Haridwar Mail as "Yoga Express".
  15. Union Agriculture Minister, Radha Mohan Singh launched a weather alert service named 'NOWCAST'. NOWCAST will be used to send SMS alerts in cases of extreme weather conditions like hailstorm, thunderstorm and squall originated by India Meteorological Department (IMD) to over one crore farmers whose mobile numbers are registered on government's mKisan portal.
  16. Infosys to open first overseas campus in China.
  17. **Future Retail & Bharti Retail merge with each other:** The merger will happen in two ways. The retail business of Future Retail will be demerged into Bharti Retail and the retail infrastructure business of Bharti will be demerged into Future Retail, Future Retail said in a statement. Future Retail is owned by Kishore Biyani and Bharti Retail is owned by Rajan Bharti Mittal.
  18. Airtel seal \$2.5 billion deals from two Chinese Bank: Leading global telecommunication company, Bharti Airtel has sealed 2.5 billion deals from China Development Bank and Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, with an average maturity of about nine years.
  19. The Industrial Finance Corporation of India Ltd. (IFCI Ltd) has now become a state-owned firm with the government increasing its stake in the infrastructure financing firm to 51.04 percent.
  20. India launched Operation Maitri to help and rescue people in quake-hit Nepal.
  21. India's first AC double-decker train launched from Lucknow to New Delhi.
  22. The Union Government approved and lowers the age limit for juveniles involved in heinous crimes from 18 yrs to 16 yrs. -
  23. 'E - Samiksha' an online monitoring mechanism launched by Indian Railways. The aim of the mechanism to monitor implementation of the various ongoing projects of Indian Railways, including Rail Budget proposals, on real-time basis.
  24. Indian Railways launched its own RuPay pre-paid card in collaboration with the Union Bank of India.
  25. The govt. of India approved **33% women** reservation in police forces of all Union Territories.
  26. Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) will invest 1.5 Lakh crore to help Indian Railways over next 5 years for development of various commercially viable projects, beginning next fiscal.
  27. The statue of Mahatma Gandhi was unveiled by Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley in London, UK.
  28. National Dairy Research Institute (NDRI) cloned a female calf **"Apurva"** using cells (somatic cells) from the buffalo's urine.
  29. Union Minister for Health & Family Welfare Jagat Prakash Nadda declared - **10 February** to be observed as **"National Deworming Day"**. It is an initiative focused on reducing the threat of parasitic worm infections, a widespread health issue affecting over 24 crore children in India alone.
  30. Bus service started between Kathmandu & Varanasi. This is the second bus service between Nepal and India, after the one connected between Kathmandu and New Delhi.
  31. **Internet.org** - Facebook and Reliance Communications (RCom) partnership to launch Internet.org in India. The app, aimed at low income and rural users, will offer access to more than 30 web services, including job listings, healthcare and education sites, as well as Facebook's own social network and messaging services.

## International News -

1. India to become full member of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) by 2016. Along with India, the process to include Pakistan as a member was also initiated during BRICS Summit.  
Shanghai Cooperation Organisation – Head office - Beijing-  
Members countries - China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.
2. India and Kazakhstan launched the first exploratory drilling at Satpayev oil block owned by India's ONGC Videsh Limited (OVL) and Kazakhstan company KazMunaiGaz.
3. **Greece becomes the first developed nation to default on International Monetary Fund (IMF) debt.**  
Major points:
  - ✓ It has defaulted on a **1.7 billion dollars (1.5 billion Euro)** payment to IMF.
  - ✓ The Eurozone Finance Ministers refused to extend its bailout to Greece after it rejected the proposal given by the troika viz., International Monetary Fund (IMF), the European Commission (EC) and European Central Bank (ECB).
  - ✓ Greece, which is now in debts, is at a risk of leaving Euro and shifting back to its old currency Drachma.
  - ✓ Euro replaced Drachma as a currency of Greece in 2001 (at the rate of 340.750 drachma to the euro). This may have a major implication for Greece economy and its exports.
  - ✓ The use of **Drachma** by Greece, which will be of lower value than Euro, will lead to increase in the cost of imports raising the specter of inflation in the already battling economy.
4. Indian Railways & Indian Army among world's biggest employers: WEF – According to the World Economic Forum (WEF) report, the Indian Railways and Indian Army are the two Indian organizations among the world's biggest employers. Both organizations employ around 2.7 million people together. Indian Railways was placed at 8th position with 1.4 million staff, while Indian Army was placed at 9th position with 1.3 million employees in the list of world's biggest employers.  
**Note:** US department of Defense is the world's biggest employer with over 3.2 million employees and Chinese military People's Liberation Army (PLA) is second biggest employer with 2.3 million employees.
5. The Champagne Hillsides, Houses and Cellars of France granted with the World Heritage Status by UNESCO. Besides, another cultural site in France – **The Climats, terroirs of Burgundy** – was declared as World Heritage Site.
6. United States surpass Saudi Arabia to become world's largest oil producer.
7. Oklahoma becomes the first state in the United States to allow the use of nitrogen gas as a method of execution.
8. Google India is best employer: Google India has been awarded with the Randstad Award 2015 for 'Most Attractive Employer in India'. Google was followed by Sony India. Microsoft India has been inducted into the Hall of Fame category this year for winning the title for four consecutive years.  
**Note:** The Randstad Award is given every year to encourage best practices for talent attraction and to identify the best 'Employer Brand' in the country based on perceived attractiveness of a company.
9. As part of the Earth Hour City Challenge of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), Seoul city, the capital and largest metropolis of South Korea, was named Global Earth Hour Capital 2015. Thane city (Maharashtra) was named National Earth Hour Capital 2015. The city of Balikpapan, Indonesia was recognized as the Most Loveable City for 2015.
10. Palestine formally became the newest state party to the International Criminal Court (ICC).
11. **India assumed Presidency of the 68th World Health Assembly:** After 19 years, India on 18 May 2015 assumed Presidency of the 68th World Health Assembly (WHA).
12. **Ireland becomes first country to legalise same-sex marriage:** In a historic referendum, the Republic of Ireland voted in favour of same-sex marriages, making it the first country to legalise same-sex marriage through popular vote.
13. **Canada** announced its plans to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions by 30 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030. The government has formally submitted its target to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.
14. **Edge" Microsoft next Web Browser:** Microsoft has announced Edge as its next Web Browser's name at the Build Developer Conference held at San Francisco in California, USA. Earlier, Microsoft had called it as Project Spartan; a code name given by the company. The browser is intended to replace the Internet Explorer (IE) in future.
15. **NASA developed 'robotic eel' to explore Jupiter's moon Europa:** NASA is developing a 'robotic eel' that could explore the icy water of Jupiter's moon Europa and power itself with energy derived from local magnetic fields. The goal is to enable amphibious exploration of gas-giant moons like Europa.
16. **President inaugurates 'Namaste Russia' festival in Russia:** President Pranab Mukherjee inaugurated a seven-month-long festival of Indian culture "Namaste Russia". It is cultural bonds that build solid bridges

friendship and understanding between peoples and countries.

### China in News -

1. **First India-China Yoga** College inaugurated by Minister of State (MoS) at Yunnan Minzu University in Kunming, China.
2. China launched the world's first electric passenger aircraft named **BX1E** that could be used in pilot training, tourism, meteorology and rescue operations.
3. China overtook the United States to become world's top importer of crude oil for the first time in April.  
**Note:** i. China is already the world's biggest energy consumer.  
ii. Saudi Arabia is the world's top crude exporter.
4. **The Chinese Version of the sacred** ancient Indian scripture Bhagavad Gita launched in China during an international yoga conference. The book was translated by Chinese Professor Wang Zhu Cheng and Ling Hai of the Zhejiang University in Shanghai and was published by the Sichuan People's Publications.
5. China nominated its former finance Minister **Jin Liqun** as the Presidential candidate for Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB).

6. **China, India, Russia to be top 3 shareholders of AIIB: Report** - According to the Chinese officials of AIIB, China will be the largest shareholder with a 30.85 per cent stake in the newly initiative Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) which will be followed by India and Russia. China is likely to have a 30.85 per cent share in the bank, followed by India with 10.4 per cent.

### About Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)

- ✓ **Headquarter** – Beijing, China.
- ✓ **Authorized capital:** It will be of 100 billion US dollars. The initial subscribed capital will be around 50 billion US Dollar and the paid-in ratio will be 20 per cent.
- ✓ **Largest shareholders:** China is highest contributor to AIIB with 29.78 billion US dollars i.e. with a 30.34 percent stake in authorized capital. China will have 26.06 per cent of the voting rights along with veto powers for certain key decisions.
- ✓ India: second largest shareholder with 8.52 per cent stake and voting share of 7.5 per cent.
- ✓ Russia: third largest shareholder with 6.66 stake and voting share of 5.92 per cent.

## News around the States

**Govt. decided to open** new agricultural and horticultural universities in the country.

- New Agricultural universities will be come up in - Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan
- Horticultural universities will be set up in Telangana and Haryana state.

### Andhra Pradesh

1. Andhra Pradesh government signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with an Australian firm for iron ore mining projects in Kurnool and Kadapa districts.

### Assam

1. Assam awarded as Best e-Panchayat state on National Panchayati Raj Diwas.
2. New Ammonia-Urea Complex to be set up at Namrup in Assam.
3. Mega Food Park Inaugurated at Nalbari, Assam.

### Arunachal Pradesh

1. Arunachal Pradesh becomes the first state in the country to launch web-based education programmes for all schools. The system is a solution built for teachers and students through Chrome books to bring the power of the web into classroom. The State government has started the programme in collaboration with Google.

### Bihar -

1. The World Bank approved 250 million US dollar credit for the Enhancing Teacher Effectiveness in Bihar Programme. The credit will be provided to improve the effectiveness of elementary school teachers in Bihar by making them more qualified, accountable and responsive.
2. **BHEL** commissioned a thermal unit of Kanti Bijlee Utpadan Nigam Limited , KBUNL, in Muzaffarpur, Bihar.
3. Bihar government has announced to give 35% reservation to women in Non Gazetted jobs in the state.
4. The Bihar government decided to provide free education to Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST) and girl students till Post Graduation (PG) level in the state. The government would reimburse the financial loss to such universities/colleges after gathering information about it.

### Gujarat -

1. India's first broad-gauge railway-line built under PPP model inaugurated between Gandhidham and Tuna-Tekra Port in Gujarat.
2. India's first International Financial Services Centre opened at GIFT city in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.



3. Vadodara district of Gujarat and China's Xinjinag province has inked a memorandum of understanding (MoU) for the development of twin cities.

#### Himachal Pradesh -

1. HP to host Paragliding World Cup 2015 for the first time. The world cup will be held on October 2015, under the aegis of Para-gliding World Cup Association at Bir Billing in Kangra valley.

#### Haryana -

1. **Mhara Gaon- Jagmag Gaon scheme:** The Haryana Government launched the Mhara Gaon- Jagmag Gaon scheme, aimed at providing 24 hour uninterrupted power supply to rural domestic consumers in a phased manner with their active participation. With this, Haryana became the first state in the country to launch such an innovative voluntary scheme.

#### Jharkhand -

1. NTPC has signed a pact with Jharkhand government for setting up a 4,000 MW Patratu power plant in the state.

#### Jammu & Kashmir

1. World Bank has approved 250 million US dollars loan for Jhelum and Tawi Flood Recovery Project in Jammu & Kashmir (J&K). The project will be funded by loan credit from International Development Association (IDA), a World Bank's concessionary with a maturity of 25 years, including a 5 year grace period.

#### Kerala -

1. **June 22 as 'Snake Bird Day'** - Kerala Government **June 22 as 'Snake Bird Day'** has declared in a bid to protect the endangered species which is also known as Indian darter.
2. **Steffanie Graf** appointed as Ayurveda brand ambassador - Tennis Icon **Steffanie Graf** appointed as Ayurveda brand ambassador of Kerala. As an Ayurveda brand ambassador she will promote Ayurveda tourism of state in North America and Europe with theme Visit Kerala Destination.
3. **Kerala became the first state to have first Hi - speed Rural Broadband Network.** India's first Hi - speed Rural Broadband Network (National Optical Fibre Network) commissioned in the Idukki district of Kerala. The aim of this service is to offer people friendly services like E - health, E - Commerce and E - Education.

#### Maharashtra -

1. **Kumbh Mela** - World's largest religious gathering Sinhastha Kumbh Mela has begun at Trimbakeshwar, Nashik district of Maharashtra.

2. **Digital villages** - Microsoft to develop '**digital villages**' and a 'smart MIDC' (industrial colony) in Maharashtra under state's flagship 'Make In Maharashtra' initiative.
3. **State butterfly** - Maharashtra officially declared **Blue Mormon** species as State butterfly as part of state symbols. With this, Maharashtra became the first State in the country to have a State butterfly.
4. Maharashtra government scraps 5% quota for Muslims in both jobs and education.
5. Maharashtra has topped in Patent filing in India during year 2013-14.

#### Top five states are:

1. Maharashtra
2. Karnataka
3. Tamil Nadu
4. Delhi
5. Andhra Pradesh

#### Madhya Pradesh -

1. The Guinness Book of World Records has recognised a record created in Madhya Pradesh on 'World Hand washing Day' in 2014.

#### Note:

- The mega hand washing event was held on 15 October 2014 to create awareness about hygiene by washing hands with soap.
  - It was organised in all the 51 districts of Madhya Pradesh in over 13 thousand places. In it more than 12 lakh 78 thousand students had washed their hand simultaneously.
  - This record broke the earlier the world record which was jointly held by Argentina, Peru and Mexico.
2. Shree Singaji Thermal Power Plant (600 MW) launched in Khandwa district of Madhya Pradesh.
  3. Asian Development Bank to provide **\$400 m loan** to improve district roads in Madhya Pradesh and to support improvements to power transmission and distribution systems in Assam.
  4. **Madhya Pradesh won national award for excellent work in MGNREGA:** Madhya Pradesh has been awarded the 10th national award for excellent work in Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act - MGNREGA. Madhya Pradesh is at the top in construction of permanent assets through MGNREGA convergence in the country.

#### New Delhi -

1. India Post launched dedicated E-Commerce Centre in New Delhi

#### Nagaland

1. Nagaland state declared as a '**disturbed area**' by Union home ministry, for one year period with an immediate effect from June 30, 2015.

#### Major points:

- The state was declared as "disturbed" area **under Section 3 of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958.**
- With this declaration the armed forces get powers to search, raid and arrest anyone without a warrant.



- This decision was taken after Naga rebel outfit, Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland- Khaplang (NSCN-K) had ambushed on Indian Army convoy killing 18 Army personnel in in Chandel district of Manipur in June 2015.

#### Punjab -

1. Punjab becomes first state to launch Soil Health Cards to farmers.
2. India's first satellite-controlled solar plant set up in Lalpur village in Punjab's Hoshiarpur district.
3. Punjab government has announced that year 2015-16 will be observed as **development year** to give further fillip to the all-round development of the state.

#### Rajasthan -

1. Rajasthan become number one state in the country in terms of total installed capacity of solar energy. It was revealed in recently released data by the Union Ministry of New and Renewable Energy.

##### Note:

(i) Rajasthan with total 1,167 megawatt (MW) installed capacity has surpassed Gujarat (1000 MW) which was previous number one state in the country.

Top five states in India are (in terms of installed capacity)

1. Rajasthan: 1147 MW. 2. Gujarat: 1000 MW.
3. Madhya Pradesh: 58 MW. 4. Maharashtra: 7 MW.
5. Andhra Pradesh: 4 MW.
2. The Rajasthan government has launched India's first mother's milk bank "JeevanDhara" in the state.
3. Rajasthan government has started LED home lighting scheme under Domestic Efficient Lighting Programme, will install more than two crore LED Lights across the state. It becomes leading state in providing LED bulb to domestic consumers.
4. Adani to set up 10000 MW Solar Park in Rajasthan.

#### Tamil Nadu -

1. Adani Group to set up 650 Mega Watt (MW) solar power plant in Ramanathapuram district, Tamil Nadu.
2. World Bank offers \$400 million loan to the Tamil Nadu government for its Sustainable Urban Development Project.

#### Tripura

1. First Kisan Call Centre (KCC) of North- East opened in Agartala, Tripura.
2. Tripura government has decided to withdraw the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA), 1958 from the remaining areas of the state.

##### Background

- Union Government had enforced AFSPA in Tripura after the relentless violence and bloodshed in tribal areas of state in February 1997.
- Since then, it was reviewed and extended in every six months as per the provisions of the Act. The

last six-month extension was given in November 2014 and its term ends by the end of May 2015.

- At the time of imposition of Act in the state, there were only 42 police stations and two-third of the entire police station areas were under this Act.
- Presently, the number of police station areas are 74 and out of them 26 police stations are fully and four police stations partly under this Act.

#### Uttarakhand -

1. Uttarakhand became first Indian state to install a system to detect earthquakes and disseminate warnings. The first system has been installed in its capital Dehradun which will issue warnings 1-40 seconds before earthquakes of magnitude 5 or more occur. The system is designed and manufactured by Italian firm, Space Dynamics which already has installed it in Japan, Italy and US.
2. The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) has approved Rajaji National Park, Uttarakhand as India's 48th Tiger Reserve. With this approval, Uttarakhand has now got a second tiger reserve after the Corbett Tiger Reserve.
3. **Uttarakhand becomes No. 2 in tiger population:** Uttarakhand has ranked second among Indian states in terms of tiger population after Karnataka in India. Uttarakhand has registered 340 tigers - a rise of 113 tigers since the last census (227) becoming the second state in the country. Karnataka with 406 tigers became the first state with highest number of tigers in the country.

#### Uttar Pradesh -

1. Jagmohan Yadav appointed as the Director General of Police (DGP) of Uttar Pradesh. He succeeded AK Jain.
2. Uttar Pradesh Government renamed the **Lucknow Prani Udyan**, popularly known as Lucknow zoo, as Nawab Wajid Ali Shah Prani Udyan, Lucknow.

**Note:** Shah was the last Nawab of Oudh under whom the province was annexed by the British under the policy of Doctrine of Lapse in 1856. Later, Shah was exiled to Matia Birj in Bengal.

3. **US NGO & MetLife to provide microfinance in UP:** Grameen Foundation India (GFI) has partnered with MetLife Foundation to provide microfinance in Uttar Pradesh. Under the agreement both the foundation will provide savings and other services to at least 40,000 poor and women clients in Uttar Pradesh. Grameen Foundation India is a wholly-owned subsidiary of US based Grameen Foundation.

#### West Bengal

1. Nadia district in West Bengal has won the **United Nations Public Service Award 2015** in the category of improving delivery of public services for or eliminating open defecation in the district.

## Important Agreements/ MoU Signed/ Deals: India & Abroad

1. India & Georgia - To develop cooperation in the field of election management and administration.
2. India & US - (MoU) on cooperation to establish the PACESetter Fund.  
**Note:** The PACESetter Fund is meant to support the Promoting Energy Access Through Clean Energy (PEACE) track of the USA-India Partnership to Advance Clean Energy (PACE).
3. India & US - To implement the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA). The agreement will promote transparency on tax matters between the two countries.
4. India & US - Agreements on health in order to enhance cooperation in health sector.
5. India & Iran - To develop Chabahar port.
6. India & Japan - To tackle cybercriminals in internet espionage, cyber terrorism.
7. India & Bangladesh - To protect the rare spectacled Langur found in the Patharia Hills Reserve Forest.
8. India & Norway - To work together on climate change.
9. **India signed five agreements with Mauritius:** India offered \$500 million concessional Line of Credit to Mauritius for key infrastructure projects. The five agreements signed between the two countries include:
  - i. Ocean economy
  - ii. Improvement in sea
  - iii. Air transportation facilities
  - iv. Import of Indian mangoes;
  - v. Co-operation in the field of traditional system of medicine and homoeopathy.
10. **India and Sri Lanka signed four agreements:** India and Sri Lanka signed four agreements during Narendra Modi's maiden visit to the country, the first bilateral tour by an Indian premier in 28 years.  
Four agreements are:
  - (i) Visa
  - (ii) Customs
  - (iii) Youth development
  - (iv) Building Rabindranath Tagore memorial in Sri Lanka.**Note:** Narendra Modi is the first Indian Prime Minister and only the second foreign leader after British Premier David Cameron, who visited Jaffna in the war-ravaged Northern Province.
11. **India and Seychelles sign 4 agreements:** Four pacts signed between two countries which includes:
  - (i) Cooperation in hydrography
  - (ii) Renewable energy, infrastructure development and
  - (iii) Sale of navigation charts and
  - (iv) Electronic navigational charts.

## Highlights of PM Narendra Modi tour to 5 nations of Central Asia - Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan

### 1. India, Kazakhstan

India and Kazakhstan inked five key agreements including a defence pact to enhance military cooperation and a contract for supply of uranium. Kazakh uranium mining company KazAtomProm has signed a contract with India's Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) to supply 5000 tonnes of uranium over the next four years.

**Note:** Kazakhstan, on the other hand, has 15% of the world's uranium resources and became the leading uranium producing country in 2009.

- ✓ **President of Kazakhstan** - Nursultan Nazarbayev.
- ✓ **Capital of Kazakhstan** - Astana.
- ✓ **Currency** - tenge

### 2. India, Kyrgyzstan

India and Kyrgyzstan signed four agreements including one to boost defence cooperation and hold annual joint military exercises.

- ✓ Agreement on Defence Cooperation
- ✓ Memorandum of Mutual Understanding and Cooperation in the field of Elections.
- ✓ MoU between Ministry of Economy of Kyrgyzstan and Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) on cooperation in the sphere of Standards.

- ✓ Agreement on Cooperation in Culture.
- ✓ **President of the Kyrgyzstan** - Almazbek Atambaev.
- ✓ **Capital of Kyrgyzstan** - Bishkek
- ✓ **Currency** - som

### 3. India, Uzbekistan

Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Uzbekistan, which is the most populous country in Central Asia. Two countries inked three pacts to boost cooperation between their foreign offices and in the field of culture and tourism.

- Strategic, economic ties
- Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism
- Expand cooperation on cyber-security

**Ashgabat Agreement** - The International North-South Transport Corridor is a ship, rail and road route for moving freight between India, Russia, Iran, Europe and Central Asia while the Ashgabat Agreement is a transit pact established in 2011 between Uzbekistan, Iran, Turkmenistan and Oman.

- **President of Uzbekistan** - Islam Karimov
- **Capital of Uzbekistan** - Tashkent
- **Currency** - som

#### 4. India, Tajikistan

India, Tajikistan sign agreements on culture, human resource development. India will set up 37 computer labs in Tajik schools.

- ✓ The Prime Minister unveil bust of Noble laureate and Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore and gift medicines to the India-Tajikistan Friendship Hospital during his visit.
- ✓ Also India signed agreement for the use of the Ayni airbase for the Indian Air Force, tops the agenda for discussion with Tajikistan. The origins of the airbase lie in the hijacking of Indian Airlines Flight IC-814 to Kandahar.
  - **President of Tajikistan** - Emomali Rahmon

- **Capital of Tajikistan** – Dushanbe
- **Currency of Tajikistan** - somoni

5. **India, Turkmenistan sign seven agreements:** Two countries inked seven pacts and vowed to jointly combat terrorism in the region. Agreement signed as: expand cooperation in foreign affairs, Supply of Chemical Products, yoga, sports, tourism and defence, Terrorism.

- **President** - Gurbanguly Berdimukhammedov
- **Capital of Turkmenistan** – Ashgabat
- **Currency of Turkmenistan** - manat

### Highlights of PM Narendra MODI – Three – Nation Tour to China, Mongolia & South Korea

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#### PM Modi visit to China

- ✓ India-China signed 24 inter-governmental agreements.
- ✓ 21 business agreements worth 22 billion US dollars signed between Indian and Chinese companies.
- ✓ PM Modi inaugurated ICICI's first branch in China at Shanghai.

1. **India & China inked 24 agreements:** India and China signed a record 24 agreements in key sectors, including in railways and education.

**Some agreements signed between India and China is as follows**

- i. A MoU on education exchange programme and 'Space Cooperation Outline'.
- ii. Four agreements were signed on sister-state and sister-city relations between Karnataka and Sichuan province; Chennai and Chongqing; Hyderabad and Qingdao; and Aurangabad and Dunhuang.
- iii. An agreement on setting up a Mahatma Gandhi skill centre in Ahmedabad.
- iv. A broadcast tie-up for Doordarshan and China's state-run CCTV.
- v. Protocol for establishment of consulates in Chengdu and Chennai
- vi. Agreements on education exchange programme, on mining and minerals, skill development, tourism and vocational education also figured on the list.
- vii. Two MoUs between Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) and Yunnan Minzu University and another with Fudan University were signed on the establishment of a yoga college and centre for Gandhian and Indian studies, respectively.

#### II. PM Modi visit to Mongolia -

- ✓ Modi is the first ever Prime Minister of India to visit the country

- ✓ India announced to provide 1 billion US dollar Line of Credit to Mongolia.
- ✓ India-Mongolia signed 13 agreements including enhancement in cooperation in border defence, air services, cyber security, renewable energy and others.
- ✓ Modi gifted Bhabhatron machine to Mongolia for cancer treatment: Prime Minister Narendra Modi gifted Mongolia a Bhabhatron, the indigenous machine developed by Indian scientists for cancer treatment, in the first demonstration of bilateral cooperation in the civil nuclear sector.

#### III. PM Modi visit to South Korea -

- ✓ Narendra Modi announced to set up a special panel to clear and fast-track South Korean investments into India. South Korea became the second country after Japan for which a special panel will be constituted.
- ✓ South Korea announced to invest 10 billion dollar for Indian infrastructure development.

**India & South Korea signed 7 agreements:** The key agreements signed between both the countries are as follows:

- ✓ Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income:
- ✓ Audio-Visual Co-Production:
- ✓ National Security Council of India and South Korea.
- ✓ Electric Power Development and New Energy Industries.
- ✓ Youth Matters.
- ✓ Cooperation in the Field of Road Transport
- ✓ Cooperation in the Fields of Maritime Transport and Logistics:

## Obituaries

### National

1. MS Vishwanathan – Legendary Music director.
2. **Bashar Navaaz** - Renowned Urdu Poet.
3. **Abdullah Hussain** - Renowned Urdu novelist.
4. **Shashi Bala** - Former Indian Women's Hockey Captain.
5. **Sister Nirmala Joshi** – She Mother Teresa as the head of Missionaries of Charity.
6. **Y K Sabharwal** - Former Chief Justice of India.
7. **Sheila Kaul** - Former Governor of Himachal Pradesh.
8. **Nek Chand** - Chandigarh Rock Garden creator.
9. **Hemant Kanitkar** – Former Indian Cricketer

10. **Amalendu Guha** - An eminent historian and social scientist.
11. Prem Nath – Wrestler
12. Hemant Sonawala – Pioneer of India's IT industry.
13. Aruna Shanbaug - A nurse who was in a unconsciousness state for 42 years after being sexually assaulted.
14. Mrinal Datta Chaudhuri - Eminent economist.
15. Sudha Shivpuri - Veteran TV actress (Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi)

### International

1. **James Horner** - Titanic Composer.
2. **Matti Makkonen** - The man responsible for conceiving the idea of short messaging service (SMS) technology.
3. **Charles Correa** - Renowned Architect.
4. B.B. King - Renowned Guitarist.

5. Bob Belden - Veteran jazz musician.
6. John Nash Jr.- The mathematician is renowned for his work in game theory, and for winning the Nobel Prize for Economics in 1994..

## New Books & Authors

1. The China Model written by – Daniel A Bell.
2. Recasting India written by – Hindol Sengupta.
3. Sourav Ganguly: Cricket, Captaincy and Controversy written by Saptarshi Sarkar.
4. Flood of fire written by Amitav Ghosh.
5. "India Central Asia Relations": The Economic Dimension authored by Amiya Chandra.
6. "Kashmir: The Vajpayee Years" – authored by AS Dulat and Aditya Sinha.
7. "37 Bridges and Other Stories" – authored by noted Pakistani author Aamer Hussein.
8. "Modi's World: Expanding India's Sphere of Influence" authored by C Raja. (The focus of the book is on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's foreign policy)

9. Benazir Bhutto: A Multidimensional Portrait written by Dr Anna Suvorova.
10. "Beyond Doubt: A Dossier on Gandhi's Assassination" written by Teesta Setalvad.
11. "The book Super Economies: America, India, China & The Future Of The World" written by Raghav Bahl.
12. "The Pakistan Paradox" written by Christophe Jaffrelot.
13. "Ahmedabad: A City in the World" written by Amrita Shah.
14. "Unbelievable – Delhi to Islamabad" written by Prof Bhim Singh.
15. "China – Confucius in the Shadows" written by Poonam Surie.

## Persons in the News

1. Anisa Rasouli – Nominated as first female judge of Afghanistan Supreme Court.
2. Harriette Thompson (92 year) – becomes oldest woman to complete a marathon.
3. Chennai's NL Beno Zephine became the first 100 percent visually-challenged person to be inducted into the Indian Foreign Services (IFS).
4. Ira Sehgal – Differntly – Abled Ira Sehgal tops Civil Services 2014 Exam.
5. Satnam Singh Bhamara became the first Indian born basketball player to be drafted in the National Basketball Association (NBA). He was chosen by the Dallas Mavericks team as the 52nd pick in the NBA

Draft. He was selected amongst the 60 young men who will play in the next season of NBA.

6. **Mhairi Black** - Mhairi Black 20 year old girl, became the youngest lawmaker of Britain. She is a member of the Scottish Nationalist Party and defeated Labour's Douglas Alexander with 17864 votes.
7. **Priti Patel** - Indian origin Priti Patel gets cabinet rank as Prime Minister David Cameron today promoted her the new Employment Minister of Britain.
8. **Francois Hollande** - Francois Hollande is the first French president to visit Cuba since 1898.
9. **Manabai Bandopadhyay** - Manabai Bandopadhyay became the first transgender college principal in India and probably in the world. She is currently an



associate professor in Bengali at Vivekananda Satobarshikki Mahavidyalaya and shall take charge as

the principal of Krishnagar Women's College, West Bengal on June 9th, 2015.

## Awards & Honours

### National

1. **Pritiman Sarkar Award 2014-15** – conferred on the Film Society of Jodhpur for the consequent fourth time for being the best film society in Northern Region in raising awareness and film appreciation.
2. **Golden Peacock environment management award** - Krishnapatnam Port in Andhra Pradesh has been awarded Golden Peacock environment management award for its achievements and initiatives in the field of environment.
3. **Moorti Devi Award 2014** - Veteran Writer Vishwanath Tripathi selected for the 28th Moorti Devi Award for the year 2014 for his book Vyomkesh Darvesh. Vyomkesh Darvesh is a lifetime story of Acharya Hazari Prasad Dwivedi.
4. **G D Birla Award 2014** - Sanjeev Galande selected for G D Birla Award for Scientific Research for 2014. The name was announced by the K K Birla Foundation and he is the 24th recipient of the award.
5. **UN Public Service Award 2015** - The district administration of Nadia, West Bengal conferred with the United Nations Public Service Award 2015 for eliminating open defecation in the district.
6. **Sahitya Akademi announced Bhasha Samman** - Four scholars were selected for the award for their contribution to classical and medieval literature in various languages.
  - ✓ K Meenakshi Sundaram was selected for contributions to Classical and Medieval Literature (Southern) for year 2013
  - ✓ Acharya Munishwar Jha has been recognised for Classical and Medieval Literature (Eastern) for the year 2014.
  - ✓ Charu Chandra Pande and Mathuradutt Mathpal have been jointly recognised for their work towards the enrichment of Kumauni.
7. Renowned carnatic vocalist Sanjay Subrahmanyam selected for the Sangitha Kalanidhi award of the Madras Music Academy.
8. 10th Navlekhan Award of Bharatiya Jnanpith was awarded to Hindi writers Babusha Kohli and Upasana. They were awarded for poem Prem Gilhari Dil Akhrot and novel Ek Zindagi Ek Ek Script Bhar respectively.
9. Parkash Singh Badal conferred with 2015 Sant Namdev National Award.
10. **Dadasaheb Phalke Award 2014** - Veteran actor Shashi Kapoor conferred with Dadasaheb Phalke Award for 2014. He is the 46th recipient of the award.
11. **Saraswati Samman 2014** - Former Union Minister and veteran Congress leader Veerappa Moily conferred with Saraswati Samman for 2014 for his Kannada poem “**Ramayana Mahanveshanam**”.
12. **National Kavi Pradeep award**: Veteran Hindi poet Gopaldas Neeraj awarded with the first National Kavi Pradeep Samman by Madhya Pradesh govt. The award has been instituted by the Madhya Pradesh govt. in the memory of Kavi Pradeep, the renowned poet and songwriter who is best known for his patriotic song 'Aye Mere WatanKe Logo'.
13. **Jnanpith award 2014** - Marathi Litterateur Bhalachandra Nemade selected for the 50th Jnanpith award for the year 2014. **Note**: Jnanpith award 2013 conferred on Hindi poet Kedarnath Singh
14. **Yash Bhati Samman 2015** conferred on Vinod Mehta (eminent journalist and writer), an award given by Uttar Pradesh government.
15. **Pt. Haridutt Sharma Award** - Senior journalist, Anuradha Prasad has been conferred with Pt. Haridutt Sharma Award for her contribution in the field of Journalism, Writing and Social Services.
16. **Shrilal Shukla Sahitya IFFCO Award 2014** - Mithileshwar conferred with Shrilal Shukla Sahitya IFFCO Award 2014.
17. **DSC Prize for 2015** - Indian - American author Jhumpa Lahiri won DSC Prize for Literature for her book, **The Lowland**.
18. **Vyas Samman 2014** - Veteran Hindi scholar and writer Dr Kamal Kishore Goyanka has been selected for the prestigious Vyas Samman for the year 2014. He was chosen for his research work ‘Premchand Kee Kahaniyo Kaa Kaal kramanusar’  
**Note**: Vyas Sammanis awarded annually by the K.K. Birla Foundation in recognition of the Hindi literary work published in past 10 years.

### International

1. Atal Bihari Vajpayee selected for Bangladesh **Liberation War award**: Former Prime Minister of India, Atal Behari Vajpayee has been selected for Bangladesh Liberation War award.
2. Noted artist Sayed Haider Raza was conferred with highest French Civilian Award Commandeur de la Lgion dHonneur (the Legion of Honour).



**Note:** Raza was bestowed with this award for his peerless achievements in transcending all boundaries, forging ties between France and India and for continuing artistic quest straddling nations, religions, cultures and philosophies.

3. **World Food Prize 2015** to be conferred on Sir Fazle Hasan Abed of Bangladesh.
  - Sir Abed has been recognized for his decades of service to human development and through building Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) that operates in 10 countries around the world.
4. **Buddha In A Traffic Jam'** film has won the best original screenplay in a Foreign Language award at the Madrid International Film Festival.
5. Make in India initiative of DIPP won Frost and Sullivan's 2015 Economic Development Innovation Award.
6. Darshan Jain, an Indian-American teacher named for US Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science.
7. GCHERA World Agriculture Prize 2015 - Indian American Professor Emeritus R. Paul Singh named for the GCHERA World Agriculture Prize 2015. GCHERA stands for Global Confederation for Higher Education Associations for Agriculture and Life Sciences.
8. Spiritual leader Sri Sri Ravi Shankar conferred with the Columbia's highest civilian award Orden de la Democracia Simon Bolivar en el grado de cruz Caballero (Order of the Democracy Simon Bolivar) by Columbia.
9. 2015 Space Pioneer Award - ISRO presented with 2015 Space Pioneer Award for Mars Orbiter Mission.
10. UK Author Ali Smith won the 2015 Baileys Women's Prize for Fiction for her novel How to be Both.
11. Eminent Ecologist Kamal Bawa has been elected as Fellow to the London based prestigious Royal Society. He was chosen in recognition of his pioneering contributions in the field of conservation science.
12. **Japan's highest civilian award** - Japan's highest civilian award conferred on the eminent scientist C N R Rao, for his outstanding contributions to science and Indo-Japanese science cooperation.
13. **RedInk Lifetime Achievement Award** - Prannoy Roy, the executive co-chairman of NDTV, was conferred with the RedInk Award for lifetime achievement.

**IIFA Awards 2015** - The 16th International Indian Film Academy (IIFA) Awards or 2015 IIFA Awards were presented in the first week of June 2015 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

#### List of 2015 IIFA Awards

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| ✓ Best Film – Queen                                      | ✓ Star Debut of the Year (Female)-Kriti sanon (Heropanti)                |
| ✓ Best Director –Rajkumar Hirani (PK)                    | ✓ Best Story-Queen (Vikas Bahl)  |
| ✓ Best Actor-Shahid Kapoor (Haider)                      | ✓ Award for Outstanding Achievement in International cinema-Subhash Ghai |
| ✓ Best Actress-Kangana Ranaut (Queen)                    | ✓ Entertainer of the year - Deepika Padukone                             |
| ✓ Best Supporting Actor- Riteish Deshmukh (Ek Villain)   |  |
| ✓ Best Supporting Actress- Tabu (Haider)                 |  |
| ✓ Star Debut of the Year (Male)-Tiger Shroff (Heropanti) |  |

14. **2014 Encore Award** - The 2014 Encore Award conferred on Indian author Neel Mukherjee for his novel The Lives of Others.
15. **Cano World Press Freedom Prize 2015** - Syrian journalist and rights activist Mazen Darwish was conferred with UNESCO-Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize 2015.
16. **Man Booker International Prize 2015** - Visionary" Hungarian writer Laszlo Krasznahorkai has been conferred with the sixth Man Booker International Prize.
17. **National Geographic Bee competition** - Indian-American student, Karan Menon (14-year-old) has won the prestigious National Geographic Bee competition in the US.
18. **University of North Carolina (UNC) Board of Governors 2015 Award** - An Indian-American professor Dr. Sivanadane (Siva) Mandjiny won the University of North Carolina (UNC) Board of Governors 2015 Award for Excellence in Teaching. He is a professor of Chemistry and born in Tamil Nadu.
19. Four Indian scientists from the Aligarh based Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College (JNMC) under Aligarh Muslim University have jointly awarded the prestigious William Harvey Award 2015. They were selected for this award in the field of Hematology for their work in the rare Hemoglobin C (Hb C) disease. Recipients of Award are Saeedul Hasan Arif Kafeel Akhtar. Shagufta Qadri. Suhailur Rahman.
20. Four Indian Americans honoured with the 2015 Great Immigrants: The Pride of America award by Carnegie Corporation of New York. These Indian-Americans are among 38 individuals that were honoured for having enlightened the society, culture, and economy.

#### Indian-American Winners

- ✓ Preet Bharara, United States Attorney, Southern District of New York
- ✓ Rakesh Khurana, Professor, Dean, Harvard College
- ✓ Madhulika Sikka, Vice President, Executive Editor, Mic
- ✓ Abraham Verghese, Physician and Writer

## **OSCAR Award 2015:**

### **List of this year winner's**

- ✓ Best Picture - "Birdman"
- ✓ Best Actor - Eddie Redmayne, "The Theory of Everything"
- ✓ Best Actress - Julianne Moore, "Still Alice"
- ✓ Best Supporting Actor - J.K. Simmons, "Whiplash"
- ✓ Best Supporting Actress - Patricia Arquette, "Boyhood"
- ✓ Best Director - Alejandro González Iárritu, "Birdman"
- ✓ Best Foreign Language Film - "Ida" (Poland)

## **Schemes/ Policy launched by Govt. of India**

### **1. Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) - Agriculture Irrigation Scheme.**

#### **Key points:**

- ✓ Scheme aims at providing irrigation facilities to every village in the country by converging ongoing irrigation schemes implemented by various ministries.
- ✓ Budgetary allocation: 1,000 crore rupees for fiscal year 2015-16.
- ✓ Funding Pattern: Centre- States will be 75: 25 per cent. In case of north-eastern region and hilly states it will be 90:10.

### **2. Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana:** It is a small deposit scheme for the girl child.

#### **Key points of the scheme -**

- ✓ In one family, a maximum of two accounts can be opened for two girl children. The account can be transferred anywhere in India from one Post office/Bank to another.
- ✓ **Age Limit:** The upper age limit of the girl child for opening this account is 10 years. The govt. has given a relaxation of one year in the upper age limit for those opening accounts till December 1, 2015.
- ✓ **Documents required** - 1. Birth Certificate of the girl child. 2. Address proof. 3. Identity proof.
- ✓ **Minimum & Maximum deposit:** The minimum deposit under the scheme is Rs. 1000/-. The maximum deposit is Rs. 1.5 lakhs. There is no limit on the number of investments one can make in an account either in a month or in a year.
- ✓ **Interest rate:** The government will announce the interest rate of the scheme every year. However, the government of India has increased the rate of interest from 9.1% (2014-15) to 9.2% (2015-16) for this financial year.
- ✓ **Maturity period:** The maturity period of the scheme is 21 years from the date of account opening, though deposits need to be made only for the first 14 years.
- ✓ The minimum lock-in in period under the Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana is 11 years.

### **2. Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY):**

- ✓ The scheme aims to impart skill training to youth with focus on first time entrants to the labour market and class 10 and class 12 drop outs.
- ✓ The scheme will be implemented by the Union Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship through the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC). I
- ✓ t will cover 24 lakh persons and skill training would be based on the National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF) and industry led standards

### **3. Bhagyashree scheme:** It is girl child scheme was launched in Maharashtra. Bollywood actress Bhagyashree is the brand ambassador of the scheme.

#### **Key points of the scheme:**

- ✓ The state government will deposit an amount of 21200 rupees in bank for a girl child born in a Below the Poverty Line (BPL) family.
- ✓ The scheme aims at providing one 1 lakh rupees on maturity after the girl completes 18 years of age.
- ✓ The scheme would be linked to the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme of Union Government.

### **4. Rashtriya Avishkar Abhiyan (RAA):** Former President of India Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam launched the Rashtriya Avishkar Abhiyan (RAA) in New Delhi. The abhiyan aims to inculcate a spirit of inquiry, creativity and love for Science and

Mathematics in school children. Rashtriya Avishkar Abhiyan is a concept developed by the Ministry of Human Resource Development. RAA is an effort to take forward the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of Digital India, 'Make in India' and 'Teach in India'.

5. **About Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana:** It is a low premium insurance scheme which will link with the Pradhan Mantri Jhan Dhan Yojna.

**Key points of the scheme:**

- ✓ **Eligibility:** Minimum 18 years and maximum 50 years and have bank account are eligible for the scheme. If the account is opened before attaining the age of 50 years, the life cover would remain intact up to the age of 55 years, if premium is paid regularly.
- ✓ Premium payable for this scheme is Rs.330 per year i.e. less than Rs.1 per day.
- ✓ Risk coverage of Rs.2 Lakh in case of death for any reason.
- ✓ The premium paid will be tax-free under section 80C and also the proceeds amount will get tax-exemption u/s 10(10D).

6. **About Atal Pension Yojana (APY):** It is a scheme mainly for workers in unorganised sector. The scheme will be administered by the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) and replace the previous government's Swavalamban Yojana NPS Lite.

**Key points of the scheme:**

- ✓ The subscribers who will joined the scheme would receive the fixed pension of Rs. 1000 per month, Rs. 2000 per month, Rs. 3000 per month, Rs. 4000 per month, Rs. 5000 per month, at the age of 60 years, depending on their contributions.
- ✓ Age limit: minimum 18 years and maximum age is 40 years.
- ✓ A subscriber can contribute for minimum period of 20 years or more and pension payment will start at the age of 60 years.
- ✓ The government of India has decided to co-contribute 50% of the subscriber's contribution or Rs. 1000 per annum, whichever is lower, to each eligible subscriber account, for a period of 5 years, i.e., from 2015-16 to 2019-20, who join the NPS before 31st December, 2015 and who are not income tax payers.

7. **Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana:** It is an insurance scheme which covers death or disablement of the policyholder caused due to accident or accidental injuries.

**Key points of the scheme:**

- ✓ Age limit: Minimum 18 yrs and maximum 70 years.
- ✓ The scheme will be a one year cover, renewable from year to year and would be administered through the Public Sector General Insurance Companies in collaboration with Banks.
- ✓ Risk coverage: The Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana will offer an accidental death and full disability cover of Rs. 2 Lakh and for partial disability cover of Rs. 1 Lakh.
- ✓ Premium: Rs.12 per annum. The premium will be directly auto-debited by the bank from the subscribers' account.

## Sports News

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**Forbes released 2015 World's 100 Highest-Paid Athletes list:** Forbes released the list of 2015 World's 100 Highest-Paid Athletes. The list has been topped by Floyd Mayweather and the only Indian to figure in the list is Mahendra Singh Dhoni.

Major points:

1. Floyd Mayweather tops the list for the second year in a row and third time in four years with 300 million US dollars.
2. Manny Pacquiao stood at the second position in the list with earnings up to 160 million US dollars.
3. Real Madrid's soccer player Cristiano Ronaldo stood at the 3rd position with 79.6 million US dollars.
4. Barcelona's soccer player Leonal Messi stood at the fourth position with 73.8 million US dollars.
5. Switzerland's Roger Federer became the highest earned tennis player with earnings up to 67 million US dollars.
6. Brazilian soccer player Neymar (23 years) was the youngest player in the list with 31 million US dollars
7. Golf player Phil Mickelson (44 years) of USA was the oldest player in the list with 50.8 million US dollars.

8. Maria Sharapova and Serena Williams were the only women athletes in the list who stood at 26th and 47th position respectively in the list.
9. **Mahendra Singh Dhoni** is the sole Indian and only cricketer in the list with earnings of 31 million US dollars. It includes 4 million US dollars from salary/winnings and 27 million US dollars from endorsements. Dhoni shared the 23rd position.

#### Laureus Sports Awards 2015:

1. Sportsman of the Year award – Novak Djokovic (Serbian professional tennis player)
  2. Sportswoman of the Year award – Genzebe Dibaba (Ethiopian middle- and long-distance runner)
  3. Team of the Year – Germany's National Football team.
  4. Exceptional Achievement award - Li Na (China) retired tennis player.
- Note:** Sachin Tendulkar has been inducted in the Laureus Academy.

#### Cricket News

#### ICC World Cup Cricket Venues:

| ODI                               | Test              | T20                 |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Australia & New Zealand – 2015 | 1. England - 2017 | 1. India -2016      |
| 2. England – 2019                 | 2. India – 2021   | 2. Australia – 2020 |
| 3. India – 2023                   |                   |                     |

**World Cup 2015:** Australia defeated New Zealand in the final to win the ICC Cricket World Cup for 5<sup>th</sup> time. Sachin Tendulkar was named as the 2015 Cricket World Cup Ambassador by the ICC for the second time, after 2011 Cricket World Cup where he was the ambassador.

#### Important points:

- ✓ Man of the Match: James Faulkner
- ✓ Man of the Series: Mitchell Starc
- ✓ Mitchell Starc of Australia was the highest wicket-taker of the tournament. He took 22 wickets in 8 matches.
- ✓ Martin Guptill of New Zealand was the highest scorer of the 2015 Cricket World Cup. He scored 547 runs in 9 matches.
- ✓ Martin Guptill scored highest -ever score of 237 not out in any Cricket World Cup.
- ✓ South African captain AB de Villiers scored fastest century in one day international match against West Indies. He scored 100 runs in just 31 balls and breaks the record of Corey Anderson of New Zealand who scored 100 in 36 balls.
- ✓ West Indies cricketer, Chris Gayle creates a history in World Cup by scoring fastest double century against Zimbabwe in 2015 ICC World Cup. He became the first batsman to hit double century in the history of Cricket World Cup. He scored 200 runs in just 138 balls. Chris Gayle is the only player to have a triple century in Tests, double century in ODIs, and a ton in T-20s.

#### IPL 8 – 2015

**Mumbai Indians won IPL 8, 2015:** Mumbai Indians defeated Chennai Super Kings by 41 runs in the final to win the Indian Premier League 2015 at Eden Garden stadium in Kolkata. This is the second IPL title triumph for MI after their maiden win in the season six in 2013. Chennai lost four finals (2008, 2012, 2013, 2015) in six appearances.

#### Key points:

- ✓ Man of the Match: Rohit Sharma.
- ✓ Player of the Tournament: Andre Russell (KKR).
- ✓ Orange Cap awarded to: David Warner (Sunrisers Hyderabad).
- ✓ Purple Cap awarded to: Dwayne Bravo (CSK).
- ✓ Emerging Player of the Season: Shreyas Iyer (Delhi Daredevils).
- ✓ Most Valuable Player: Andre Russell (KKR).

### Other cricket News-

1. IPL franchise Chennai Super Kings, Rajasthan Royals suspended for two years by Justice Lodha panel
2. BCCI suspended Mumbai Ranji player Hiken Shah for corruption.
3. South Africa debutant Kagiso Rabada became only the second cricketer in the history of One Day International (ODI) cricket to claim a hat-trick on ODI debut.
4. Former Indian cricketer Sachin Tendulkar was voted as the Best Test Player of the 21st century in an online poll titled Top-100 Test players' list since 2000. The result of poll conducted by Cricket Australia's website, cricket.com.au.
5. Bangladesh won the three-match One Day International (ODI) Series against India 2-1 played in Dhaka. This was Bangladesh's first series win against India. Mustafizur Rahman of Bangladesh claimed the Man of the Series Award for his outstanding bowling performance. He picked up 13 wickets in the three matches.
6. Veteran West Indies fast bowler Sir Wesley Winfield Hall has been inducted into the ICC Cricket Hall of Fame. He becomes 80th cricketer to be inducted in the ICC Cricket Hall of Fame and 18th from West Indies.
7. Rahul Dravid named as the coach of India A team and Indian U 19 cricket team.
8. Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) co-owner Shah Rukh Khan acquired Caribbean Premier League (CPL) T20 team Trinidad & Tobago (T&T).
9. Indian off-spin cricketer Harbhajan Singh became the ninth all-time highest Test wicket-taker by claiming 416 wickets in 102 matches.
10. India's legendary batsman Sachin Tendulkar has been voted the 'Best Test player' of the 21st century in an online poll conducted by Cricket Australia's website for the list of the 100 best Test players since 2000.
11. Ranji Trophy 2015 - Karnataka defeated Tamil Nadu by an innings and 217 runs and lifted Ranji Trophy title 8<sup>th</sup> time.
12. AB De Villiers conferred with South Africa Cricketer of the Year Award for 2015.
13. Sundaram Ravi inducted into Emirates Elite Panel of ICC Umpires for 2015-16.
14. England batsman Jonathan Trott has announced his retirement from international cricket with immediate effect after a disappointing tour of the West Indies.
15. Australia wicketkeeper, Brad Haddin announced retirement from One Day International (ODI) cricket.
16. Joe Root and Charlotte Edwards were named as England men's and women's cricketers of the year 2014-15 respectively.
17. Cricket legends Sachin Tendulkar, Sourav Ganguly, VVS Laxman inducted into BCCI's high-powered advisory panel to guide the board in all matters related to the game.
18. Kohli named sixth most marketable athlete in world: **SportsPro magazine:** Indian cricketer Virat Kohli has been rated as the world's sixth most marketable athlete. Canadian tennis player Eugenie Bouchard tops the list, followed by Brazilian football star Neymar and Masters golf champion Jordan Spieth.  
**Top 6 most marketable athletes**
  1. Eugenie Bouchard (Tennis)
  2. Neymar (Football)
  3. Jordan Spieth (Golf)
  4. Missy Franklin (Swimming)
  5. Lewis Hamilton (F1)
  6. Virat Kohli (Cricket)
19. **Syed Mushtaq Ali T-20 tournament 2015-** Gujarat beat Punjab by 2 wickets and won the Syed Mushtaq Ali T-20 cricket tournament.
20. The International Cricket Council (ICC) announced the team of the ICC Cricket World Cup 2015 with Brendon McCullum as its captain.
21. Indian batsman Rohit Sharma has been nominated by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) for this year's Arjuna Award.
22. **Zimbabwe to be the first Test team to tour Pakistan since 2009:** The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has confirmed that Zimbabwe will be the first Test team to tour Pakistan since 2009. No Test team has toured Pakistan since March, 2009 when militants attacked the Sri Lankan team in Lahore
23. **South Africa launch "Africa T20" Cup:** To promote cricket in the African continent and to nurture young talent in the continent, Cricket South Africa announced the launch of the Africa T20 Cup. The tournament featuring Zimbabwe, Kenya, Namibia, hosts South Africa and 12 CSA affiliates will run from 4<sup>th</sup> September to 4<sup>th</sup> October 2015.
24. Sean Abbott won Bradman award 2015.

### Football News

| FIFA (Football) World Cup Venue | FIFA U – 17 World Cup Venues |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Russia – 2018                | 1. Chile - 2015              |
| 2. Qatar - 2022                 | 2. India – 2017              |



1. **2015 Copa America Cup Football Tournament** - Chile defeated Argentina to win the 2015 Copa America Cup Football tournament for the first time. Chile defeated Argentina 4-1 through penalties shootout.
2. **2015 Women's Fifa World Cup** - USA defeated Japan to win Women's FIFA World Cup for the third time.
3. **2015 FIFA U-20 World Cup** - Serbia defeated by Brazil 2-1 to win the title.
4. The Manchester United became the World's most valuable brand in the World football with 1.2 billion US dollars. Also, it became the first club to pass the 1 billion US dollar mark.
5. FC Barcelona won the 2015 Champions League title by defeating Juventus FC.
6. Sunil Chhetri has become the first Indian footballer to score 50 international goals. He achieved this feat in his 2018 World Cup qualifying match between India

and Guam. At present, he is the captain of the Indian Football team.

7. **BRICS** Under - 17 football tournament to be held in India in 2016. BRICS nation include - Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.
8. Subrata Paul has been recommended for the prestigious Arjuna Awards by the All India Football Federation.
9. Santosh Trophy 2015 - Services defeated Punjab by 5-4 in the final to win the title. Services have now won the title for the fourth time.
10. Cristiano Ronaldo has won the FIFA Ballon d'Or award for 2014.
11. Kolkata giants Mohun Bagan won their maiden I-League title in 13 years. In the final clash at Kanteerva Stadium in Bengaluru, Mohun Bagan managed a 1-1 draw against the defending champions Bengaluru FC.

## Hockey News -

### Hockey World Cup venue

| Venue                | Year |
|----------------------|------|
| 1. India (Men's)     | 2018 |
| 2. England (Women's) | 2018 |

1. National Hockey - Railway girls clinch National Hockey C'ship title: Railway Sports Promotion Board (RSPB) had defeated Jharkhand by 12 - 2 to win the 5th National women hockey championship title.
2. Hockey Champions Trophy 2014 - Germany beat Pakistan to win the title.
3. Sultan of Johor Cup title (Hockey)2014- India(juniors) defeated Great Britain to retain the title.
4. Hero Hockey India League trophy 2015: Ranchi Rays defeated Jaypee Punjab Warriors by 3-2 in the final.

## Tennis News

1. Roger Federer won the 2015 Gerry Weber Open tennis title. He defeated Andreas Seppi of Italy.

| Wimbledon Title 2015 |                               |                                      |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Category             | Winner                        | Runner up                            |
| Men's single         | Novak Djokovic                | Roger Federer                        |
| Women's single       | Serena Williams               | Garbine Muguruza (Spain)             |
| Men's double         |                               |                                      |
| Women's double       | Sania Mirza & Martina Hingis  | Ekaterina Makarova and Elena Vesnina |
| Mixed doubles        | Leander Paes & Martina Hingis | Alexander Peya and Tímea Babos       |

### Note:

- ✓ Serena Williams won the Sixth Wimbledon (women's singles) title and total 21 Grand Slam titles.
- ✓ Sania Mirza won first-ever women's doubles Grand Slam title, although she has won three mixed doubles titles at the majors. With this title, Sania also became the first Indian women to win a Wimbledon title.
- ✓ Novak Djokovic won his third Wimbledon (men's singles) title and total 9<sup>th</sup> Grand Slam titles.

| French Open 2015 |  |                                     |
|------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| Category         | Winner                                 | Runner up                           |
| Men's single     | Stanislas Wawrinka (Switzerland)       | Novak Djokovic (Serbia)             |
| Women's single   | Serena Williams (US)                   | Lucie Safarova (Czechoslovakia)     |
| Men's double     | Ivan Dodig & Marcelo Melo              | Bob Bryan & Mike Bryan              |
| Women's double   | Bethaine Mattek Sands & Lucie Safarova | Casy Dellacqui & Yarosalava Shedova |
| Mixed doubles    | Bethaine Mattek Sands & Mike Bryan     | Lucie Hradecka & Marcin Matkowski   |

**Note:** Stanislas Wawrinka of Switzerland won his first French Open title of Tennis and second grand slam title after Australian Open 2014.

| Madrid Open Title 2015 |                                      |  |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| Category               | Winner                               | Runner up                              |
| Men's single           | Andy Murray                          | Rafel Nadal                            |
| Women's single         | Petra Kvitova                        | Svetlana Kuznetsova                    |
| Men's double           | Rohan Bopanna & Florin Mergea        | Marcin Matkowski & Nenad Zimonjic      |
| Women's double         | Casey Dellacqua & Yaroslava Shvedova | Garbie Muguruza & Carla Suárez Navarro |

| Italian Open (Rome Masters title) 2015 |                                   |                                |
|--|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Category                               | Winner                            | Runner up                      |
| Men's single                           | Novak Djokovic                    | Roger Federer                  |
| Women's single                         | Maria Sharapova                   | Carla Suarez Navarro           |
| Men's double                           | Pablo Cuevas & David Marrero      | Marcel Granollers & Marc Lopez |
| Women's double                         | Timea Babos & Kristina Mladenovic | Sania Mirza & Martina Hingis   |

#### Indian Wells Open Tennis (BNP Paribas Open 2015) -

| Title                  | Winner                       | Runner up                         |
|------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Men's single</b>    | Novak Djokovic               | Roger Federer                     |
| <b>Women's Singles</b> | Simona Halep                 | JelenaJankovic                    |
| <b>Women's Double</b>  | Sania Mirza & Martina Hingis | Ekaterina Makarova& Elena Vesnina |

| Australian Open 2015 |                              |                                       |
|----------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Category             | Winner                       | Runner - up                           |
| Men's Single         | Novak Djokovic               | Andy Murray                           |
| Women's Single       | Serena Williams              | Maria Sharapova (Russia)              |
| Mixed Doubles        | Leander Paes& Martina Hingis | Daniel Nestor and Kristina Mladenovic |

#### Commonwealth Games (CWG)

1. CWG - 2022 – Durban, South Africa.
2. CWG - 2018 – Gold Coast, Australia.
3. CWG 2014 held in Glasgow, Scotland

#### Badminton News

1. Canada Open Badminton 2015 (Men's single)- Lee Chong Wei defeated Ng Ka Long Angus .
2. Canada Open Badminton 2015 (Women's single) - Michelle Li defeated Kaori Imabepu.
3. Canada Open Badminton 2015 (Women's double) - Jwala Gutta & Ashwni Ponappa defeated Eefje Muskens and Selena Piek.
4. Carolina Marin became the first Spanish player to win the Wimbledon of badminton, All England Championship title. She defeated Saina Nehwal in the final.

### Formula 1

1. Austrian Grand Prix 2015 - Nico Rosberg (Mercedes driver)
2. British Grand Prix 2015 - Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes driver)
3. Spanish Grand Prix 2015 - Nico Rosberg (Mercedes driver)
4. Monaco Grand Prix 2015 - Nico Rosberg (Mercedes driver)
5. Bahrain Grand Prix 2015 - Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes driver)

### Other Sports News

1. China won the 2015 Nongfu Spring Snooker's World Cup by defeating Scotland 4-1 in the final.
2. India defeated Sri Lanka to win 2015 South Asian Basketball Championship.
3. Veselin Topalov won the Norway Chess Tournament 2015.
4. Goa to host the Youth Delphic Games in February 2016.
5. Inderjeet Singh (shot-putter) became first Indian to win a Gold Medal at World University Games in Gwangju.
6. Satnam Singh Bhamara became the first Indian basketball player to be drafted in the National Basketball Association (NBA) after being picked by Dallas Mavericks in New York.
7. Karnataka to host 64<sup>th</sup> Senior National Volleyball Championship in 2016.
8. Floyd Mayweather Jr defeats Manny Pacquiao: American boxer Floyd Mayweather Jr. defeated Manny Pacquiao of Philippines to win the unified World Welterweight title of World Boxing Council, World Boxing Organisation and World Boxing Association.
9. Tejas Indian youngster Chess player Tejaswini Sagar bags gold in under-15 World School Chess Championship. She defeated Kavinya Miyuni Rajapaksa of Sri Lanka in the final round.
10. Gagan Narang won the bronze medal in the 50 metre Rifle Prone Event of the ISSF World Cup at Fort Benning in the US. He has earned himself a quota place for the 2016 Rio Olympics. After Jitu Rai and Apurvi Chandel, Narang is third Indian shooter to make the Rio cut.
11. Former Commonwealth Games gold medalist Gurpreet Singh became India's fifth shooter to qualify for the 2016 Rio Olympic Games.
12. **Men's category** - Army emerge champions in Federation Cup: The Indian Army team have emerged champions in the 19th Federation Cup national senior athletic championships. The Tamil Nadu team came second by securing 114 points.
13. **Women's category** - Kerala emerge champions in Federation Cup. Karnataka came second with 68 points.  
**Note:** i. The best athlete award in the championship in the men's category was won by Inderjeet Singh of team Haryana for his stupendous toss in the shot put event, which helped him qualify for the Rio Olympics in 2016.  
ii. Srabani Nanda from Odisha was selected as the best athlete in the women's category for the agility she displayed in the 100 metre event.

### Science | Defence | News -

1. S Christopher is new Director General of DRDO.
2. GS Reddy appointed scientific advisor to the Defence Minister.
3. **INS Vikrant undocked in Kochi** - India's first indigenous aircraft carrier INS Vikrant undocked at the Cochin Shipyard in Kochi, Kerala.
4. Mirage 2000 fighter jet landed on Yamuna Expressway as part of developing road runways for emergency landings.
5. Varuna Exercise - 14th Edition of Indo-French Naval Exercise VARUNA 2015 concluded.
6. Surya Kiran VIII - Indo- Nepal joint military exercise concluded in Nepal.
7. **HADR Exercise** - Indian Navy conducted a large scale Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) exercise in the Lakshadweep Islands (Karavati, Aggatti, Kalpeni and Androth).
8. Indian Army dedicated **Prerna Sthal** at Hussainiwala to the nation. The commemorative monument was built to honour the sacrifice of soldiers of India. The newly constructed Prerna Sthal is located at the gateway of the memorial to Shaheed Bhagat Singh at Hussainiwala, a village in Ferozpur district of Punjab, India, where Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru were cremated on 23 March 1931.
9. The First ship of Project-15B, a Guided Missile Destroyer **Visakhapatnam** launched at Mazagaon Dock Limited (MDL), Mumbai. It is the largest missile destroyer commissioned in India till now.
10. Hand-in-Hand' - It is a joint military exercise between India and China.
11. **INDRA** - INDRA is a joint, bi-annual military exercise conducted by India and Russia.

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